

EXHIBIT B

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

In re Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001

03-md-1570
(GBD)(SN)

This document relates to:

Alexander Jimenez, et al. v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 1:18-cv-11875 (GBD) (SN)

DECLARATION OF FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIP

I, Jody Howard, declare under penalty of perjury, as provided for by 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the following statements are true and correct:

1. My name is Jody Howard, and I am the step-son of Alan LaFrance, who died on September 11, 2001 when the World Trade Center collapsed. I submit this Declaration for the purpose of demonstrating that Alan LaFrance was the functional equivalent of my father.

2. While not Alan LaFrance's biological son, for the reasons set forth below, I should be deemed the functional equivalent.

3. Alan LaFrance came into my life in 1980 when he started dating my mother. I was 9 at the time.

4. Six months later, on September 27, 1980, he and my mother were married and, along with my brother Jem, we became a family. *See* Exhibit 1.

5. I never knew my biological father growing up. He left my mom when I was 3 years old (although I did meet him once briefly when I was 16).

6. Alan (who I only ever referred to as "Dad") was the only true father I have ever known.

7. Dad worked hard to provide for my mother, me, and my brother. Among other jobs, he worked as an audio/visual specialist at Windows of the World in the World Trade Center. *See* Exhibit 2.

8. He was a whiz at electronics, and I always loved watching him work on projects in our living room.

9. When he wasn't working, he my dad also loved playing the drums; he was very skilled.

10. In addition to this financial support, he treated me like his son, emotionally and socially. He would give me advice (and, of course, discipline) like any loving father and as to the outside world, there was no question that "I was his son." *See* Exhibit 3.

11. His whole side of the family treated me that way. I was a "nephew" to his brothers and a "grandson" to his parents.

12. My dad would take my brother me to the movies in Manhattan and the Bronx and we would always take short trips to places like six flags, Amish country and along with other family members to Maine. We loved it.

13. We lived in the same household for 10 years and I moved out when 19, although I still kept in touch with my parents through regular telephone calls and visits to the house.

14. Even after I began to live on my own, we still regularly took family trips.

15. For example in February 1994, dad planned a rip for the three of us (my dad, my mom and me) to go to Arizona and California.

16. We made a similar trip later that year, which is when I proposed to my wife. I had borrowed money to purchase the ring from my dad, but when I later tried to repay it, he would have none of it and told me to keep it.

17. After Camille and I got married, mom and dad would also visit us in Virginia and Indiana

18. I was 30 years old and living in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on September 11, 2001.

19. I was at a Jehovah's Witness ministry when a woman arrived and asked if we had heard that a plane had hit the World Trade Center.

20. This is when I first learned of the September 11th terrorist attacks.

21. At first, I thought my Dad would have been out of harm's way because he worked nights.

22. I was trying to call my mom, who still lived in the Bronx, all day to confirm he was safe, but the telephone lines were busy.

23. Eventually, I got through and heard the devastating news that he was working that day and had not been heard from since that morning.

24. I immediately began making preparations to travel to New York (a fifteen hour drive).

25. My mother was in complete shock and had been taken to a friend's house to be consoled.

26. My brother was also grieving; I tried my best to stay strong for my mom and try to do everything I could to find my dad.

27. After a brief visit from a traveling minister who provided words of encouragement, we planned to go down to the hospitals searching for my dad, but ultimately were directed to go to the Armory.

28. We arrived at the Armory and filled out various missing persons forms and other paperwork while we waited in line.

29. A reporter from the weekly standard asked if he could tag along as we waited and searched; we agreed so long as he gave us space. Ultimately, he wrote two articles regarding our experience. *See* Exhibits 4, 5, and 6.

30. My mom was a nervous wreck and completely broke down when, upon reaching the front of the line, the Red Cross nurse asked us “what *was* your father’s name?”

31. I talked to her and tried to calm her down.

32. His name was not on the list.

33. Later, we travelled to lower Manhattan; there was white debris and a terrible burning smell everywhere.

34. I also provided material for DNA analysis at the Victim’s Family Assistance Center. *See* Exhibit 7.

35. We slowly came to the devastating realization that my dad was gone forever.

36. Unfortunately, we never located his remains.

37. I remained in New York for a month, which was a very emotional time, but I continued to do my best to be strong for my mom.

38. Eventually, I gathered the family together (including the extended family on my Dad’s side) because we had to make a decision about what to do when didn’t find his body.

39. We decided to hold a memorial. In planning for the memorial, I asked an elder official from our faith if he would help us plan and then preside over the ceremony.

40. At one point while we were planning, the elder said that because I was not his biological son, I technically did not get to have input.

41. Because of this comment, my aunts, uncles, and other family members said they wanted a different elder to officiate because that comment was so contrary to how my father and I, and all of them, felt.

42. With subsequently held a memorial service on Sept 29th, two days after my parents' anniversary where she was going to give him a new wedding ring (he had lost his).

43. In dad's obituary, I was listed as his son. See Ex. 8.

44. It was only when I was heading back home in October that, as soon as we passed over the GW Bridge, I could no longer hold back the emotion and I totally broke down. I pulled over after my wife insisted she drive because I was an emotional wreck.

45. Thereafter, I suffered from PTSD and was struck with a fear of flying for the next 12 to 13 years.

46. In sum, Alan LaFrance was my Dad and we considered each-other to be father and son in every way.

47. He was in my life for 22 of my 30 years on this earth and will always miss him dearly. See Exhibit 9.

Executed on: 14/AUG./2019

Name (Signature):

Name (Print):

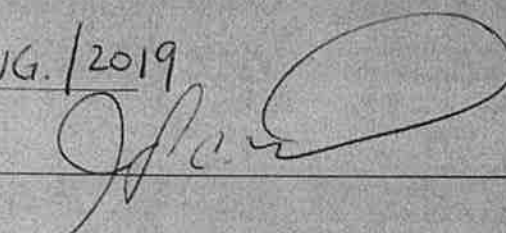

JODY HOWARD

EXHIBIT 1













EXHIBIT 2



ALAN LAFRANCE

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD BLD. #1 FLOOR 106

EXHIBIT 3

BOARD OF EDUCATION CITY OF NEW YORK
REPORT OF ABSENCES

DEWITT CLINTON HS

MOSHOLU PKWAY.

BRONX NY

10468

Dear Parent,

Your child was absent from school one or more times (AS INDICATED - IN **BOLD** TYPE)

during the week of: 9/15 - 9/19/86.

MON. TUE. WED. THU. FRI.

Please encourage regular attendance since absences from school may hinder your child's scholastic progress.

Kindly fill in the reason for absence and have your child return this card to his/her homeroom teacher. Should you wish to discuss this further please call the school and ask for the attendance office.

REASON FOR ABSENCE: _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
PERMIT NO. 3156

HOWARD JODY

1035 228

C/O ALAN LAFRANCE

1170E 229 DR S 9A

BRONX NY

10466

EXHIBIT 4

the weekly
Standard

Sept. 20, 2001

Erlene,

Thank you for your allowing me to share in your most difficult time. I haven't been able to stop thinking about your family since. All of you continue to be in my prayers.

Best,
Matt Labash

EXHIBIT 5

South Toward Hell

by Matt Labash | September 10, 2016 07:00 AM

It doesn't seem right, really—romanticizing catastrophe instead of just confronting its grim particulars head-on. Still, they cut quite a swath at Sir Harry's Bar in the Waldorf-Astoria, these brave men with forearm tattoos and walrus mustaches—firefighting volunteers who have swooped in from places like Danbury and Pittsburgh to shore up New York's own decimated ranks. The hotel has graciously provided free accommodations. So after a 12-hour shift sifting through World Trade Center rubble, firemen stagger into the bar like flame-retardant cowboys, still wearing their charbroiled gear. As they fill the room, I turn to a well-heeled patron, trying to summon an appropriate reference from a Peckinpah movie. "They look like somebody," I say, struggling. "Like goddamned heroes," he replies, as the fireman douse their dust-infested insides with complimentary rounds.

But the further south one travels from Midtown, the fewer morale-quickenings encounters one has. On the ride down to 14th Street, I notice splintered glass embedded in the dashboard of my cab. "It flew through my open window," says cabbie John Parafestas, who was driving near the south tower when the second hijacker steered the plane through it. "I busted a U-turn on the West Side Highway. I thought, 'I gotta get home now, or I'll never get home again.'"

Below the 14th Street perimeter, non-rescue vehicles and civilians are forbidden. Lower Manhattan has been emptied by terrorists. Even the drug-dealers and nut-cake orators are on leave from Washington Square Park. And while it is just eerily silent from the Village to Little Italy, everything below Canal Street looks like Pompeii.

Even after two days of clean-up, many streets retain footprints in a light snow of concrete ash. Emergency vehicles, many of them caught in the towers' collapse, are stacked like soot-covered matchbox cars. Newcomers to the scene needn't ask directions to the heart of the wreckage—since the spot is marked by a smoky, sulfuric cloud that changes shape with the wind, but never quite moves on. Signs marking closed businesses—"Lingerie, Lounge Wear, Essentials"—seem profoundly decadent, as all that matters now (besides, as my cabbie suggests, "bringing the pain" to whoever did this) is the 20-story-high heap of broken stones and people.

On my walk down to the site, I catch up with an iron worker from Queens. He doesn't want his name used, nor does he seem thrilled that I'm interrupting his breakfast—a Budweiser tall-boy which he sips out of a slim paper bag. "I need this drink," he says. After he tells of his prior day's work, it's understood why.

"Yesterday was cruel to the system," he explains, as if the human-interest stories on the cable shows haven't quite conveyed the intensity. He spent his volunteer shift not only cutting through fallen I-beams, but also recovering human remains. Not bodies, exactly. "Everything was in parts," he says. "I

filled 25 bags full of parts." The part he's seeing now—and saw last night during haunted sleep—belonged to a woman. He knows this because her toes were painted, though everything above her thigh was gone. We stop at a security checkpoint beyond which I'm not allowed. He now seems reluctant to part. "I don't want to go back in there," he says. His eyes fill up behind aviator sunglasses, but he snaps to, taking a final anesthetic swig. Still buried under concrete slabs and twisted steel are two firefighter friends and a paramedic cousin. "I just want to use my skills, cut metal, whatever," he says. "That's why I'm going back."

There are also plenty of horrors above 14th Street, and nowhere more than at the National Guard Armory on 26th and Lexington. Outside the grimy, gothic building where a surly gargoyle keeps sentry, people wind around the block in two lines. The first line contains those who are, for the first time, filling out "Personal Information Questionnaires"—not about themselves, but about loved ones who have not turned up since the Twin Towers collapsed. The second line contains people who have already filled out the painstaking identification survey (the facial hair category, for instance, contains 10 subcategories from "Fu Manchu" to "Handle Bar"), but who have more information to give.

In this second category are Elliot and Andy Waller, two Maryland brothers on the lookout for their cousin, Josh Rosenthal, last seen on the 90th floor of Tower Two. The Wallers have come to supply investigators

with more information, such as hair samples they pulled from their cousin's brush. After telling me how they almost failed to secure Josh's dental X-rays (his dentist's office is near Barneys, which today received a bomb threat), they hand me a "Missing" poster describing all their cousin's vitals. While the Wallers store their posters in a manila envelope, others are less subtle, preferring to advertise missing loved ones on their torsos—as if they were wandering city streets, waiting to be recognized.

The inside of the armory represents something Dante would have conceived of if he'd possessed a truly dark imagination. Hundreds of people sit on metal folding chairs on a scuffed wood floor, while hundreds more clog the aisles. It's difficult to tell if people are crying or perspiring, as the only cooling agents are two small fans propped against televisions beaming the latest in disaster developments. Row upon row of people shrug off detectives and chaplains and oversolicitous Red Cross volunteers, who every 30 seconds or so offer anxious family members bottled water or chocolate chip cookies or Arizona Iced tea.

"They ought to give you tranquilizers instead," jokes Edlene LaFrance, a nurse from the Bronx who is waiting, along with her adult son Jody Howard and his wife, to find out what became of Alan LaFrance, her husband and Jody's father.

It's about the only joking the family does. They, like other relatives, sit in stony silence, facing the door that leads to the basement, where, 20 at a time, they are taken to see two lists indicating that their loved one has been located and is either hospitalized or

deceased. After two hours of waiting—"the most nervous I've ever been" says Edlene—the family finally gets the call. They go through an archway, descend a staircase, and snake down a long hall to see the lists. One volunteer offers a final shot of Pepsi, as if caffeine can prepare someone for the worst news they'll ever get. At a basement table, a Red Cross volunteer offers to comb the lists for Alan's name. Edlene assents, then lays her head on the table like a despondent child. Alan has not turned up in any of the hospitals. Neither is he on the deceased list.

For a moment, hope is restored. Edlene clutches a wedding picture of her husband in his white tuxedo. Their twenty-first anniversary is in two weeks, and maybe she'll be able to give him his already-purchased present—a new wedding ring. But then there's the hard math. It's been 58 hours since Alan disappeared in Tower Two. Though Alan wasn't on the "bad list," he wasn't on the "good list" either. Edlene's consolation prize, it turns out, is not much of one at all. Tomorrow, the bad list will be updated, and she'll have to look at it again.

Matt Labash is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

EXHIBIT 6

A Year of Firsts and Lasts

by Matt Labash | September 16, 2002 12:00 AM

BRONX, NY I met Edlene LaFrance on the worst day of her life. Or maybe it was the second worst, or the fifth, there are so many to choose from now. Two days after the Twin Towers fell, her 43-year-old husband, Alan, lay buried at the bottom of one of them. Though the city was awash in acts of unparalleled selflessness, I'd spent that morning thinking selfishly, walking the ash-caked streets of lower Manhattan, trolling for battle-scarred humanity to fill my notebooks before deadline. On a bum tip, I rushed to the Chelsea Piers, where ambulances full of recovered wounded were rumored to be arriving. When I got there, a bystander scoffed at my naivete. "There aren't any more wounded," he said, letting the thought finish itself. Another reporter suggested the action had moved cross-town to the National Guard Armory on Lexington, and indeed it had. The street outside the building looked like a third-world bazaar. Except instead of merchants peddling trinkets, family members were holding "Missing" posters, begging for whereabouts and clues, as if their loved ones had gone down to the corner for a pack of cigarettes, then had forgotten the way home. The media were supposedly barred, but I slipped inside the building. In all the chaos, it was about as difficult as crashing Penn Station. Hundreds of family members sat in rows, their bodies racked with tension and slicked with sweat in the

un-air-conditioned hall. Amidst this grimness, I scouted for the most approachable faces, which belonged to Edlene, her son Jody, and his wife, Camille. I asked if I could follow their family through this process, and they graciously assented. Edlene clutched a photo of her husband in his white wedding tuxedo. Their 21st anniversary was in two weeks, and on the morning of September 11, for some reason, she'd come close to giving him his biggest present early--a new wedding ring. We made polite chat over grief counselors' incessant offerings of sandwiches and Sprite. Edlene quipped that she could use some tranquilizers instead. She answered all my questions dutifully, but her eyes kept drifting to the archway at the front of the room. It was there, down a staircase, that 20 people at a time were being taken to scour two lists--the first indicating that their loved one had turned up hospitalized, the second that they'd turned up dead. When it was the LaFrance family's turn, we went downstairs. A Red Cross volunteer offered to look for Alan's name. Edlene, a portrait of poise a few minutes earlier, simply laid her head down on a table while her son sat beside her, stroking her hair. Alan didn't turn up on the deceased list, but he wasn't on the hospitalized list either. A deductive silence enveloped us--the sound of someone's life coming undone. A year later, as journalists and grief groupies again jostle for a piece of 9/11, it's tempting to sit back and chortle at excesses and opportunism. God knows the last year has seen enough of them: American Paper Optics issuing "Images of 9-11 in 3-D," the commemorative cigarette lighter with a flame flickering right over a picture of a burning World Trade

Center, the "9/11: 24/7" mock-tribute album from drag-queen Tina C. featuring songs like "Stranger on the Stairwell" and "Kleenex to the World." Still, as we congratulate ourselves on how life goes on in all its wretched excess, there are thousands like Edlene. Her life actually has changed, and will remain that way beyond any news cycle. I catch up with her at an apartment building that sits next to a noisy highway in the Bronx. A landlord's letter posted in the lobby cautions residents not to let their pets urinate in the stairwell. She welcomes me at the door, and says that she has lost some weight and some hair since we last spoke, but she is just as I remembered: diminutive and dignified, her warm voice accented with a steel that suggests she is being brave by necessity, if not by nature. Her rent is \$709 per month, and it seems a bit steep for the two rooms she inhabits. They're the same rooms she lived in with Alan. And in a way, that \$709 is what got him killed. An audio/visual technician, Alan freelanced all over the city--primarily doing conferences at a New York public library and at the Windows on the World restaurant on the 106th floor of the World Trade Center. Edlene could always tell to which job her husband was headed by what he was wearing. If he was off to the library, he'd wear casual clothes. If it was the World Trade Center, he'd put on a black suit. The library gig was more lucrative, but his employer took too long to pay (six to eight weeks). Though usually Alan just worked nights at the World Trade Center, he sometimes needed money to make rent. So the morning of September 11, he went there to set up a breakfast conference. Edlene can't remember her last words to her

husband, but for days after the towers went down, she tricked herself into recalling that he hadn't been wearing his black suit. From the testimonials of his friends and relatives, it is clear Alan was the kind of guy you'd want to be around. He liked his breakfasts big and greasy at a nearby diner, and he loved to play drums. At his Jehovah's Witness congregation's cookouts, he always assumed the role of grillmaster, perhaps because even at 6'4", he was such a suspect basketball player that friends mockingly called him "Jump Shot." He took his grandmother shopping almost weekly. He liked to work on cars, but not for money. Often, Edlene would gaze out the window at busy Bruckner Boulevard and see a stranded motorist. She'd shoot her husband a help-those-poor-people look. He'd grumble a little, then grab his tools and ride to the rescue. Now, the first face Edlene sees in the morning is Mohamed Atta's. She keeps a New York Post cover photo of the man who killed her husband on the floor next to her bed. Every morning when she wakes up, she steps on his face. It is a small, desperate gesture, but it's the only revenge she'll ever get. When asked why she'd keep a picture of this murderer in her bedroom (she never calls him a "terrorist" or "hijacker," always a "murderer"), she says, "A lot of times when I don't think it's real, I just turn over and there's his face. Then I know it's real." It wouldn't seem she'd need any more reminders. Her husband, who had no life insurance, handled the finances, and within the first few weeks after he died--her mind scrambled and her heart literally palpitating--she couldn't even locate her checkbook. Unable to keep track of the bills, she had to get an extension after an

eviction notice. Though some charity has found her (Black America Web Relief ended up footing her rent through August), most of the \$30,000 or so she's received from victim's assistance funds has gone to offset her son Jody's expenses, since he frequently has to fly back with his family from Chattanooga, Tenn., to help his mom navigate mounds of paperwork and other disasters. A typical one occurred when Alan's old Volvo had to be retrieved from an impound lot where it was towed from the train station after sitting there for weeks (Alan had the only key). Likewise, her telephone was nearly cut off, but with her nursing job in a "clinic in a bad neighborhood," she has managed to keep it paid up, along with Alan's cellphone account. She doesn't have the cellphone-- Alan had it with him when he died--but by keeping the account open, she can still call his messages to hear his voice. "They never found remains," she explains. "It's all we have left of him." EDLENE LAFRANCE is not a whiner, though she could be forgiven if she were one. She hasn't told her overburdened son that her doctors are worried she has breast cancer. Having switched nursing jobs earlier this year, she has told no one at work besides her boss that she lost her husband on 9/11. Even her own mother, who is senile and who Edlene doesn't wish to traumatize, has no idea her daughter is now a widow. "When she asks where Alan is," Edlene says, "I tell her he's at work." I ask her if she blames God for any of this. "Why would I?" she asks, out of conviction or convenience or both, "He didn't do it." She says she's been hitting the Scriptures pretty hard lately--not Job, as you might expect, but all the widows'n'orphans

passages. There are a lot more of them than she had noticed before, and she says they present a compelling body of evidence that God won't let her fall through the cracks. So far, she says, He hasn't. The thing that's changed the most for her is time. She no longer measures it in weeks and months, but in firsts and lasts--the last time she did something with Alan, the first time she must do it without him. She doesn't cry much anymore, but the day before my visit, a light bulb burned out in her hallway. She ended up in a heap on the kitchen floor for 20 minutes. It was a 1,000-hour bulb that Alan had last changed. She has not replaced it. There are long lists of firsts she is avoiding. She will not go on vacation, and chooses not to go to the movies, since that was Alan's favorite pastime. When she goes to their favorite diner for breakfast, she sits at the counter, since she and Alan used to sit at a booth. She knows she must get over this, and it will be easier to, she reasons, after September 11. Right now, she dreads that date the most. Though she'll be surrounded by extended family, all she really wants to do, she says, "is take some sleeping pills and wake up on September 12th." After hours of conversation, we set off for the train station on foot, strolling through her neighborhood in a late summer half-light. Another 30 minutes, she says, and she wouldn't be out on these streets. At first, I think she means because they're crime-ridden. But no. "That was the time me and Alan always walked together," she explains. As she says this, I nod understandingly. But I can't understand. Not really. We have all grown rather possessive of September 11, taking it out, reexamining it when it suits us, making it

mean what we want it to mean. Edlene doesn't have that luxury. I want to make it easier for her, but that can't be done, so I hold my tongue. She thanks me for listening, and I nod some more, as she puts me on a train that will take me back to my wife and son. Matt Labash is senior writer at The Weekly Standard.

EXHIBIT 7

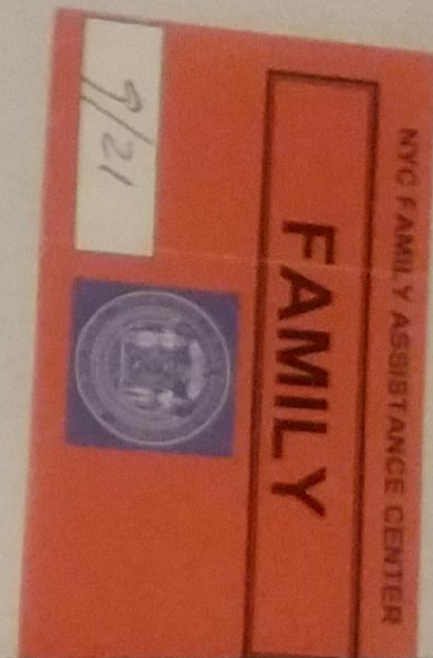
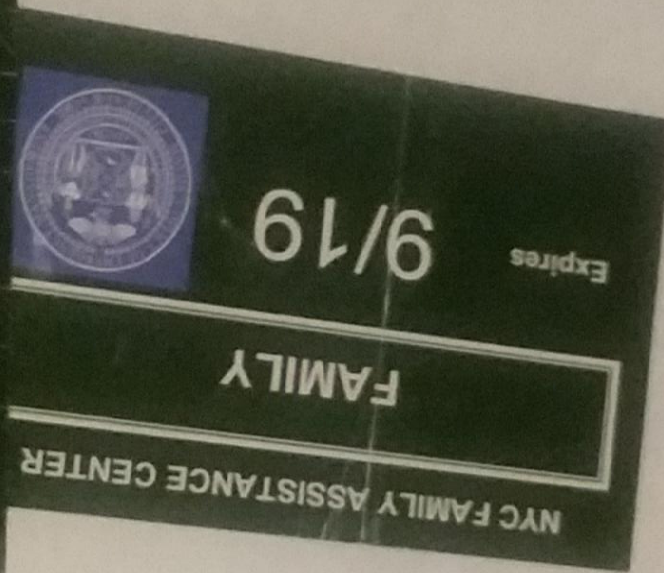


EXHIBIT 8

*In Loving Memory
of
Alan Charles LaFrance*



July 1958 - September 2001

Memorial Service
Saturday, 29 September 2001
1.30 p.m.
Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
3025 Ely Avenue, Bronx, New York

OBITUARY

Alan Charles LaFrance was a wonderful family man who grew up in the Bronx, New York. He loved talking with others about the Good News of God's Kingdom in which peace will abound, righteousness will dwell and there will be no more sickness, pain and death.

Alan was an Audio/Visual Technician by Trade and worked at such places as the Rainbow Room, Schomburg Center and Windows on the World. His Ministry, trade and enjoyment from playing the drums, introduced him to many famous and interesting people - this to his pleasure and undoubtedly theirs.

Alan is survived by his wife Edlene, sons Jem and Jody, his father Aubrey, mother Madelyn, his brothers and sisters, Jerry, Ann-Marie, Carolyn, Yvonne, Steven, Sean, Corey, Andre, grandchildren, Giovanni, Ashanti, Jeneice and many friends worldwide.

We know for him its just the blink of an eye until he sees us again, but for us who acknowledge the passage of time, he will be sorely missed until we see him again.

Lovingly Submitted - The Family

Order of Service

Opening Prayer

DiscourseJames Jones

Song #185“Life Everlasting Is Promised”

Obituary.....James Jones

Song # 15.....“Life Without End At Last”

Closing Prayer

“And He will wipe out every tear from their eyes
and death will be no more, neither will mourning
nor outcry nor pain be any more.
The former things have passed away.”
Revelation 21: 3,4

“Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in
which all those in the memorial tombs will hear
his voice and come out....”
John 5:28,29a

EXHIBIT 9

Still hoping, 365 days later

Chattanooga's stepfather is one of the missing at Trade Center

BY JAN GALLETTA
STAFF WRITER

A year after the terrorist attacks, Jody Howard of Chattanooga still clings to the hope that the only father he's ever known will turn up alive.

His stepfather, Alan Charles LaFrance, who stood 6 feet 5 inches tall, played the drums and lived in the Bronx, N.Y., was in the Windows on the World restaurant at the World Trade Center in New York

9-11



One Nation

on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001. His body has not been found.

"We are still hoping he's alive, but I don't really think so. My dad was on the 106th floor of Tower One, and the plane hit on the 94th," Mr. Howard said. The 1-year-old New York City native and paralegal moved to Chattanooga three years ago.

While much of the nation prepares to mark the 9-11 anniversary with solemn memorials, Mr. Howard said he plans to work and take his wife dinner. He said he won't news coverage of 9-11

butts more now to see signs than when we were in New York," he said. Mr. Howard said his stepfather worked at night as an

See HOPING, Page A7



Jody Howard holds a photograph of his stepfather, Alan LaFrance, who was in the World Trade Center when it was struck by terrorists on Sept. 11, 2001. His body has not been recovered.

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One year later

TVA to cut coal plant e

Pettigrew, chief executive officer of Erlanger Health System. "It's a looming issue, but it's not a critical problem today. It could

ber, said Tennessee needs a cap on damages before the problem grows as severe as in neighboring states, where juries dole out huge

Mr. Clement said. E-mail John Commings at jcommings@timesfreepress.com E-mail Carolyn Park at cpark@timesfreepress.com

Africa, Syria and Taiwan. The United States had a biological weapons program from 1942 to 1969 and had 30,000 tons of chemical weapons in 1997 when it pledged to destroy the stockpile within 10 years.

■ Sixteen nations have the missile technology capable of carrying nuclear, biological or chemical weapons to distant targets.

Hoping

● Continued from Page A1

audio/visual technician at the World Trade Center. He arranged sound and lighting for the restaurant's entertainers. But Mr. LaFrance was in the Twin Towers to set up for a breakfast conference when the buildings collapsed, according to Mr. Howard.

"We borrowed a car, drove 15 hours to New York and made it on the 13th," he said. "I figured we'd find him in one of the hospitals."

Mr. Howard and his wife, Camille, joined his mother, Edlene, and they spent much of the next month at the National Guard Armory, where they and other families waited to comb lists of hospital patients and those known dead, he said.

They carried a photo of Mr. LaFrance in his white wedding tuxedo. His 21st wedding anniversary was just two weeks away, his stepson said.

The scene "was like refugees in a war-torn country," Mr. Howard said.

"They (Red Cross workers) asked us the smallest details about my dad, like 'Was he circumcised?' On the lists, some victims were listed as 'black,' some 'white' and some 'unknown.' That's how badly burned they were."

Despite DNA testing on sam-

ples that family members provided, Mr. LaFrance's name never appeared on any lists of identified bodies, according to Mr. Howard.

The family conducted a memorial service on Sept. 29. Three weeks later, they were issued a death certificate for Mr. LaFrance.

Mr. Howard said friends were kind to them when they returned to Chattanooga.

"We gathered around him and gave him our support," said Calvin Toney, their next-door neighbor.

"We said we'd be there for him if he needed us."

Some provided financial help, as well.

"We gave them October's rent, and the next month we got a \$1,000 check for them from a foundation," said Faye Bentley, the Howards' landlady. "Before that ran out, another check for \$2,500 came."

Mr. Howard said the foundation money came from radio personality Tom Joyner. He said he also has received funds to offset his travel expenses.

"We've been back to New York about every four months to visit my mother. But I didn't want to be up there on Sept. 11,"

he said.

On a recent trip, Mr. Howard said, he tried to move a picture of Mohammed Atta, charged as a conspirator in the 9-11 attacks, that Mrs. LaFrance keeps by her bed.

"She said, 'Don't touch it.' She wants to see it each day," said her son.

On that same trip he brought his father's drums back to Chattanooga.

"What keeps me going is knowing that the dead are sleeping and I'll see my father again," Mr. Howard said. "I'm learning to play, so I can play the drums for him when I do."

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